

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, May 23, 2003

AS NATIONAL THREAT CONDITION IS RAISED TO "ORANGE," THE MPDC GOES ON HEIGHTENED ALERT AS WELL

With the Department of Homeland Security raising the National Threat Level from Yellow (elevated) to Orange (high) this past week, the MPDC heightened its own emergency response level from Level I to Level II. (The Department has three response levels, with Level III being the highest.) On Tuesday, May 20, the MPDC activated its Joint Operations Command Center, including the network of 14 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras that are mounted primarily in the downtown area of the District. The cameras will be recording during this period of heightened alert. Also, the Department has enhanced security around DC government facilities and other areas of local interest, including synagogues, temples and mosques. The MPDC is also working in conjunction with other local and federal agencies. MPDC officers remain on regular, eight-hour shifts, and the Department advises residents that the heightened emergency response level has not diminished regular patrols in DC neighborhoods. Residents are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings and remain vigilant. Anyone who observes a suspicious package or activity is advised to call the police immediately using 9-1-1.

① For more details on the MPDC's heightened alert, as well as links to other useful emergency preparedness and homeland security resources, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2093>

① Learn more about the MPDC's use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), including current camera locations, at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/CCTV.shtm>

NEW LEADERS FOR HUMAN SERVICES, TRAINING AND 3RD DISTRICT ARE AMONG COMMAND CHANGES ANNOUNCED BY CHIEF RAMSEY

Chief Ramsey this past week announced a number of changes to the MPDC's Command Staff, including new leaders for the Human Services Division, Training Academy and Third Police District. Assistant Chief Shannon Cockett was transferred from the Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science to be assistant chief in charge of Human Services, which oversees personnel, recruiting, labor relations and medical services. Replacing Cockett as head of the Training Academy is Commander Cheryl Pendergast, formerly commander of the Third District. Chief Ramsey has appointed Inspector Joshua Ederheimer, formerly the commanding officer of the Civil Rights and Force Investigations Division, to serve as Acting Commander of 3D. To enhance leadership in the field, the Chief has also placed Inspectors in charge of two police district substations: Inspector Robin Hoey in the Fourth District substation (4D-1) and Inspector Joel Maupin in the Sixth District substation (6D-1). Janice Sullivan has been named to replace Inspector Hoey as Director of the MPDC's Office of Youth Violence Prevention.

① For detailed information on the MPDC's organizational structure, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/org/orgchart.shtm>

① Need to contact a unit within the MPDC? Visit the online directory at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/contact/telephonedir.shtm>

RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PSA SYSTEM

The MPDC has scheduled a series of community meetings in all seven police districts to get residents' feedback on proposed changes to the Department's Police Service Area (PSA) system. The meetings are a follow-up to discussions at the Mayor's Crime Forum II, held on May

10, in which the proposed new boundaries for the PSAs were presented. The proposed plan would reduce the number of PSAs from 83 to 39, with the boundaries generally matching the “neighborhood clusters” used by the DC Office of Planning. This change is designed to enhance inter-agency coordination in addressing neighborhood crime and disorder problems and to increase resident involvement in community policing. In addition, reducing the overall number of PSAs would increase the number of officers assigned to each PSA, thus providing more flexibility to staff neighborhood patrols. The MPDC is seeking public comment on the proposed plan, either through the community meetings or in writing. Community comments will be taken into consideration before any changes are finalized.

MPDC URGES PERSONNEL REFORMS TO HELP INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OFFICERS AVAILABLE FOR PATROLS

The MPDC this week urged the DC Council to enact legislation that will help increase the number of officers available for neighborhood patrols by speeding up the process by which some officers on limited duty or sick leave for extended periods of time can be given disability retirements. Executive Assistant Chief Michael Fitzgerald told the Judiciary Committee that 14 percent of the MPDC’s approximately 3,625 sworn officers are currently unavailable for full duty. While some of these situations are unavoidable (such as officers called up for military duty or recuperating from duty-related injuries), a sizeable percentage of the unavailable officers are on extended limited duty or sick leave for non-duty related matters. These officers count toward the Department’s overall headcount, but are not available for full-duty patrols in DC neighborhoods. EAC Fitzgerald urged the Council to adopt stricter standards for how long officers could remain on limited duty or extended sick leave for non-duty related incidents, before they are recommended for disability retirements. He also urged a review of the staffing and funding of the current Retirement Board, which hears cases not only for the MPDC, but also for DC Fire/EMS, US Park Police and others.

NEWS & NOTES

Holiday Driving Safety. Motorists are reminded that police in DC and neighboring jurisdictions will be paying special attention to aggressive and drunk drivers this Memorial Day weekend. The MPDC continues to participate in the nationwide “Click It or Ticket” mobilization, which runs through June 1, and the Department will have sobriety checkpoints over the weekend. Learn about these and other traffic safety measures at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/traffic.shtm>

Drug Free Zones. Drug free zones in the Fourth and Fifth Police Districts continue through Monday. Next weekend, drug free zones are tentatively planned for targeted locations in the First and Seventh Districts. Details on the Anti-Loitering/Drug Free Zone law are at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>

Black Pride and Capital Pride. The MPDC’s Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit will be staffing informational tables at both this weekend’s Black Pride ceremonies (May 23-26) and the Capital Pride event (June 1-8). Learn more at the GLLU website: <http://www.gaydc.net/gllu/>

Torch Run for Special Olympics. The MPDC will be joining approximately 40 other law enforcement agencies in the DC region in supporting this year’s annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, to held on June 6. Details at: <http://www.specialolympicsdc.org/>

① The proposed new PSA boundaries can be viewed on the MPDC website, and comments can be offered via email, by clicking on: http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/PSAs_proposed.shtm

① For the list of police district meetings, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2091>

① During the same hearing, the MPDC urged the Council to provide additional “tech pay” to lieutenants or captains who will serve as PSA leaders under the newly configured PSA system. The proposal is designed both to reward the hard work of the PSA leaders and to encourage more of these officials to remain in their PSA assignments, thus ensuring greater continuity of leadership on the PSAs.

① Read EAC Fitzgerald’s complete statement at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2003/05/052203.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 5/23/03)

- 2003: 95
- 2002: 86
- % Change: +10.5%

Arrests (week ending 5/17/03)

- Total: 765
- Drugs: 119
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 18
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 31

Firearm Recoveries (as of 5/20/03)

- Total: 767
- May: 121

Traffic Fatalities (as of 5/23/03)

- 2003: 18
- 2002: 25
- % Change: -28.0%